

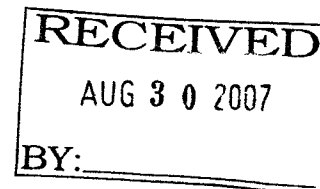
bec. CA HSR Directors
FYI. Regional Rail, in which you partner,
is on the wrong track, especially re BART's
future and service over the Altamont. See also my
letter to you of 27 June 2007 (copy attached).
Bob Allen

I 009

223 Donner Avenue
Livermore, CA 94551-4240

August 27, 2007

Katie Balk
Regional Rail Project Offices
c/o BART, 300 Lakeside Drive, 16th Floor
Oakland, A 94612



Re: Comments, Draft Regional Rail Plan

I strongly urge starting fresh on planning changes in Bay Area rail. The plan shown in the August 2007 Draft Report Summary appears grossly defective. I write as a former BART director (1974-1988), after a career in engineering and operations on 3 railroads now part of UP (mostly SP's Western Division); as a life member of the American Railway Engineering and Maintenance of Way Association (AREMA); a member of AREMA Committees 12 (Rail Transit) and 17 (High Speed Rail) and a former member of Committee 16 (then Economics of Railway Location and Operation). My comments are strictly my own and do not reflect those of these organizations.

I009-1

Freight railroads abhor steep grades. Water level lines (such as the former SP A and B lines through Martinez to the Central Valley) require much less motive power and fuel and create less air pollution. Other rail lines linking the Bay Area with other parts of the country (e.g., over the Altamont or Cuesta summit) cost more to operate. Curvature and grades greatly limit train speeds and increase track distance. Any regional rail plan should stress routing heavy freight through Martinez, not over the Altamont or Cuesta grade.

I009-2

Electric operation (e.g., BART, HSR) tolerates steeper grades than on-board power (e.g., diesel), where grades must be more limited and environmental problems arise from exhaust and noise. BART can run on 3% grades, while most freight lines are under 1%.

Safety issues come with grade crossings, low platforms, and public access to trackways. BART's safety record (35 years, 2.2 billion passenger trips, 28.9 billion passenger miles, with only one passenger fatality - excluding suicides) attests to the safety of rapid transit. (May that record stand unbroken!)

The plan states that BART's outward expansion is nearly complete. How short-sighted! BART trackway at grade (ballasted double track with train control and traction power) in a wide freeway median costs on the order of \$12.5 million/mile. (Land, cars, stations, yards, shops, engineering, environmental analysis and mitigation, etc., come extra.) There are at least three corridors where properly planned freeway work can make such economical BART trackway possible:

I009-3

<p>I-80, El Cerrito del Norte to Crockett; SR-4, Pittsburg to SR 160; I-580, Hacienda to Greenville Road.</p>	<p>I009-3 Cont.</p>
<p>Each freeway is terribly congested now. CMIA and other money in Prop 1B bonds could help improve the freeways and leave a median wide enough for BART. Regional rail planning should include securing right of way for widening these freeways. Interim "preBART" (BART gage, locomotive power, short high platforms, BART-like cars) could come at less cost, yet allow easy, quick, and cheap conversion later to regular BART.</p>	<p>I009-4</p>
<p>The I-580 line east of Greenville could curve left under the high westbound I-580 lanes and rise to the former SP grade and an ACE/I-580/BART intermodal station. Later, pending funding, it could easily be built on the former SP and along old Altamont Pass Road to Mountain House, Tracy, and <u>an intermodal station on the future CA HSR Central Valley spine line.</u> <u>BART should serve most commuters better than HSR and at less cost.</u></p>	<p>I005</p>
<p><i>This is not a slow - just a fact of life. RSL</i> ACCMA and Caltrans plan an interim eastbound HOV lane in the I-580 median. This project should be deferred and made part of a comprehensive I-580 rebuild that starts with right of way acquisition between Hacienda Blvd. and Greenville Road. The interim project would add greatly to the cost of BART in the median and benefit very few people.</p>	<p>I009-6</p>
<p>The dead end Isabel/Stanley concept would have such poor access and chop up land so badly that it should be deep-sixed. I sired this corridor long ago when Pleasanton wanted BART along I-580 and Livermore wanted BART along the railroads; the City of Livermore later asked for BART along I-580 and sold the land planned for a Stanley Blvd. Station; and BART bought the land for stations along I-580 at West and East Livermore. Access to an Isabel/Stanley station would be greatly inferior to one near I-580, and extending BART to the Central Valley would be prohibitively costly.</p>	
<p>CA HSR should have one new line into the Bay Area <u>from Pacheco Pass</u>, and up to San Jose and San Francisco. It should then take over a modified Capitol Corridor line from San Jose and Santa Clara via Newark, Mulford, possibly a new line on the water side of I-880, Coliseum/Oakland Airport, and a new intermodal station near Magnolia (where the UP used to cross the old SP).</p>	<p>X I009-7</p>
<p>A new BART line by-passing West Oakland could take some of the BART trains from the Washington Street portal along the east side of I-880 and the old UP diagonal to the intermodal station, then on the water side of the post office, over the old SP wye, and to the trans-Bay tube. Admittedly it would be costly, but the intermodal station would give San Francisco great access to the Sacramento HSR line without the cost of a new tube.</p>	<p>I009-8</p>
<p>Another project that should be considered is a BART spur up Oak Street in San Francisco, to be extended later via Masonic to a major parking/intermodal structure near the Golden Gate Bridge. Any mishap in the Mission Corridor would still allow trans-Bay service.</p>	

The rail plan should include acquiring land for at least a four-track grade-separated peninsula corridor. Two of the tracks should be express/HSR/freight and two local. Consideration should be given to making the local tracks BART gage, linking the planned Santa Clara BART station with the BART line at Millbrae. Since BART requires only one operator per train of up to 10 cars and roughly 700 seated passengers, and since fare collection is automatic, the economics of having BART for local peninsula commute traffic could prove substantial. Caltrain express service would stay unchanged.

IO09-8
Cont.

An MOS (Minimum Operating Segment) of the VTA/BART Silicon Valley line should be planned at grade from Warm Springs on the former WP and on a rebuilt structure over US 101 to a new Alum Rock intermodal station near Santa Clara Street. The bridge over US 101 would be a dramatic BART signature in Santa Clara County. This MOS could be started even if the more costly subway portion of the line incurs delay. (The subway cost would be much less if the planned tunnel under Stockton Street between Diridon and I-880 were replaced by a surface line alongside Caltrain.)

Regional rail planners should try to acquire the old WP right of way from the end of what VTA bought to the former SP crossing just south of Tamien. That land could prove useful for an interim Caltrain-type service linking BART with Tamien. It would provide game-time rail transit service to the sports venues, whose parking could be used at other times by commuters.

I doubt greatly that the Bay Area needs a regional rail network, as the summary claims. A unique track gage keeps BART trains separate from freight. The public would be better served by upgrading and extending BART than by bringing in a costly new breed of cat.

IO09-9

I hope that this plan goes back to the drawing board.

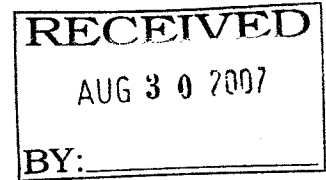
Robert S. Allen
BART Director (1974-1988)
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Copy of a letter I sent you earlier

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27 June 2007

California High-Speed Rail Authority
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Confirming and extending my remarks at today's Board meeting, I hope that you will consider these concepts in your Draft Bay Area to Central Valley HST Program EIR/EIS:

Page 19. Delete the Travel Times to Sacramento. Service from the Bay Area to Sacramento should be via Martinez. That travel would not go by either the Altamont or Pacheco Pass.

Plan for three routes:

1. LA-Pacheco Pass-SJ-SF;
2. SJ-Okld-Mtz-Sac; (Capital Corridor Route)
3. LA-Valley-Sac.

The old SP Valuation Maps suggest ways to speed up Okld-Sac run times, but they would obviously need BCDC approval.

Work with Caltrans and BART to extend BART's I-580 line to Greenville Road, with probably two stations in the freeway median: West Livermore near Isabel and East Livermore near the truck scales. East of Greenville Road, it would go under the Westbound I-580 lanes and up to the old SP roadbed. It would follow that roadbed and Old Altamont Pass Road to Mountain House, then to Tracy, and on to an intermodal station on your LA-Sac spine line. (BART trackway costs roughly \$12.5 million/mile in a freeway median, including ballasted double track, traction power, train control, and fencing, but not including stations, cars, land, earthwork, structures,, or environmental work.)

Unlike freight rail over the Altamont, which is very sensitive to grades, passenger trains such as BART or HSR should easily take 3% grades. If you do run over the Altamont, there appears to be no need to follow the longer and winding freight railroad lines. BART might be a better bet for Central Valley commuters to the Bay Area than HSR.

An Oakland intermodal station near Magnolia (Old SP-WP crossing) would make sense with a new BART West Oakland by-pass line running from the Washington Street portal near downtown Oakland, along the water side of I-880 and the old WP diagonal, back of the post office, and over the SP yard to the Trans-Bay tube. I realize this would be expensive, but it seems like the best way to get a real intermodal in Oakland. BART's Trans-Bay tube would eliminate the cost of an HSR tube under the Bay, yet provide San Francisco passengers really good access to HSR to Sacramento.

Your future line between San Jose and Oakland should include a stop at Santa Clara (where a people-mover to SJ airport is planned) and follow the Alviso and Mulford lines through Newark. Possibly it could stay on the water side of I-880 between Mulford and Fruitvale, bypassing Elmhurst and Melrose. Whether or not you run via Elmhurst, you could have a station with great Oakland Airport and BART connections where you run under the planned Oakland Airport people-mover.

At one time, I strongly favored an Altamont route. With CTC's CMLA decision Feb. 28, it looks like I-580 could be widened enough for BART to Greenville Road. A Pacheco Pass route would simplify operations and greatly reduce the cost and impacts of a line over the Altamont, through the Livermore Valley, and down Niles Canyon.

I would be glad to discuss these ideas with you or your staff. I am retired from SP (Engineering and Operations), and have experience with D&RGW and C&NW, which are also now part of UP. I am a Life member of AREMA, serve on Committees 12 (Rail Transit) and 17 (High Speed Rail), and was an elected BART Director from 1974 to 1988.

Robert S. Allen
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